

Life mellows with jazz

Pat Daugherty
Arts & Entertainment

Three months ago the Yacht Club, catering solely to the jazz enthusiast, opened its doors as a bar and lounge offering live entertainment on Wednesday and Saturday nights.

Since then, Sunday night has been added to the program, and manager Mike Gaghan says "Chances are good right now that we'll probably be featuring entertainment four nights a week" very soon.

America is mellowing out, and jazz appears to be an intricate part of the process. People have turned from the activism that characterized the beginning of this decade to a personal indulgence in the finer things of life. In music, the swing has been toward jazz.

During the last year there has been a significant increase in the number of clubs featuring jazz in Chapel Hill.

Gaghan sees the Yacht Club as a sort of social club where "people can go to relax, play backgammon and listen to a good variety of jazz" indulge themselves.

The Mad Hatter, on the other hand, has quite a different atmosphere. While this club is featuring more and more jazz, their policy is to offer whatever type music happens to be in the area. They now offer live entertainment five nights a week, said general manager Les Ligon.

If the idea of a good dinner, soft music from the swing years and a dance floor seems particularly intriguing, Chapel Hill also offers Chez Condoret, part of the village scene for a little over a year.

Although the jazz, provided by Michael Sachs' All-Star Band from New York, was just added at the first of June, it seemed to be quite successful. Jacques Condoret, one of the owners, said that it was very expensive to bring in entertainment like that, but they decided to do it because

they "wanted to offer something different."

Presently, the "ol' standards" are only offered on Wednesday nights, but Condoret will consider expanding the schedule in August when they return from vacation.

But isn't jazz something that only beatniks listened to? According to Gaghan, the Yacht Club gets customers anywhere from 21 to 45 years old and older. He said, "We don't have a dress code, so we have a good mix of people. We are trying to work more toward the working folks, although we do get students too."

The Mad Hatter also gets all age groups, and Ligon said that they "certainly don't want to turn anybody away." He commented that generally, the age of the people depends on the band, and noticed that jazz tends to bring in a slightly older, more mellow crowd, although the ages still vary quite a bit.

At Chez Condoret, the appeal is geared more toward the 30-40 age range, but they do have some younger people too. Condoret feels that their prices might be rather expensive for a college student on a budget.

And how does one go about finding a good jazz band to "help sow the mellow seed?" Word of mouth is a start. The Yacht Club first relies on references from other musicians, then listens to tapes of the group and goes over their resume. If they like the sound, they will feature them on one of the slow nights and see how they do. Gaghan said they normally give them two weeks to prove themselves.

The Mad Hatter goes through agencies and trade magazines to check tour schedules. Album sales and album reviews also help predict the drawing power of the band.

Ligon said that they use seven or eight

local artists (like Arrogance and Brice Street) regularly, and book national acts when they can. He explained that the trouble with booking acts from outside this area, is that "most don't come south of the Mason-Dixon line. They just don't come through here as often."

So far, Chez Condoret has only booked the Michael Sachs band, which consists of four musicians and one singer. However, Condoret said that they won't consider hiring anyone unless they come in for an actual audition.

Bringing in a group like the Sachs band that originates out of the Triangle area, is an expensive deal. Condoret is satisfied that it is worth the money, however, and does not charge extra for this entertainment when a customer eats dinner at the restaurant. There is a \$2 charge for people only interested in hearing the band.

The Yacht Club also charges a \$2 cover for their bands on Saturday, but this is regardless of whether or not a dinner is ordered. The charge is only \$1.50 on Wednesday and Sunday. Gaghan commented that the cost of the out-of-town acts is forcing them to consider starting a show and buffet package. "We'd be charging anywhere from \$15 to \$22 cover. But that would include dinner—a full course meal with dessert and the band."

The cover charge at the Mad Hatter averages \$1 for local bands during the week and \$2-3 on the weekends. National acts, which will draw either on the weekends or on the weeknights, cost \$5-6. Ligon stated that they have paid as much as \$2,250 to bring in an act, but they usually get them for around \$1,000. On the whole, he said, jazz acts don't cost as much in cover.

Liquor by the drink will very likely have an effect on the jazz industry, Ligon believes. He said there "should be an upcropping of more jazz with liquor by the drink because it is good listening music." He thinks that people will enjoy sitting down with a good drink that they don't have to mix themselves, and that they don't have to worry about finishing up before leaving, as well as just listening to some good, mellow jazz.

On the whole, the clubs seem to view the new bill as a way of increasing their profit margin and boosting business.

How does the increased interest in jazz in Chapel Hill relate to the nationwide trend in the industry? According to Michael Simball, a graduate student and a serious jazz enthusiast, "the pattern is cyclical. We grew up with rock-n-roll, and now we're looking for something different. The kids realize the stars and big names of the last 40 years are aging, and they want to get a listen before they disappear."

Jazz has been around for a long time and it seems to be reorganizing for an even longer stay. While many of the big names are no longer with us, many of the other equally respected people are making comebacks.

For instance, Dave Brubeck, a great jazz musician of the 50s, has now organized the New Brubeck Quartet and drafted his three sons to compose a "family jam."

In June, the White House helped celebrate the 25th anniversary of the Newport Jazz Festival, the country's annual jazz bash in New York. The audiences during the festival were reported to have been among the largest ever to attend a social event at the White House. Included in the festival were 40 of the top jazz artists, names like George Benson, Dizzy Gillespie and Ray Eldridge.

So, jazz, described as America's most indigenous form of music, is here to stay. It's the mood of the people that fluctuates, and thus determines how something like jazz is accepted and appreciated. Right now, America is in the mood.

Jazz Festival

Connor Beach hosts good music, seething masses of people and a joyous celebration of Carolina springtime during the annual ritual of Springfest.

Tonight, Carolina Union is sponsoring a Jazz Festival in front of Connor dorm to extend a similar courtesy to the summer season and summer students. The music is to start at 6 p.m. and will feature three Triangle-area groups: Surveyor (original and contemporary music), the Jazz Mongers (bebop) and Trio and Special Guests (a Miles Davis sound).

Admission is free but a blanket and cooler of refreshment might help. Come to the Jazz Festival—summer on Connor Beach can be just as good as in spring.

THE Daily Crossword by Raymond F. Eisner

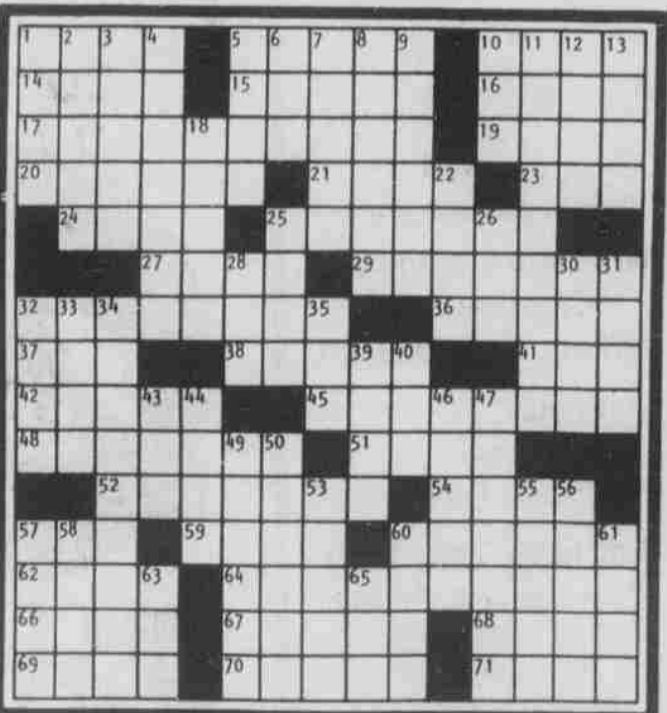
- ACROSS
- 1 Tibetan gazelles
- 5 Perry and family
- 10 One of a Latin trio
- 14 Dawn: Sp.
- 15 Vigilant
- 16 Pianist Peter
- 17 Dessert
- 19 Winglike
- 20 Cumberbunds
- 21 Gallery treasures
- 23 Take off
- 24 — do-well
- 25 Qualify
- 27 "I Remember —"
- 29 Deride
- 32 Boys' pets
- 36 Antoinette
- 37 Generation
- 38 Troll
- 41 One: Ger.
- 42 Negates
- 45 French jet
- 48 Argues formally
- 51 Tumults
- 52 Menu items
- 54 Nevada's neighbor
- 57 Greek cross
- 59 Before cast or vise
- 60 Formulas of belief
- 62 Israeli port
- 64 Breakfast item

- 66 Cord
 - 67 Ria
 - 68 Arrow poison
 - 69 River in Germany
 - 70 Alliance acronym
 - 71 Sleeping unit, for short
- DOWN
- 1 Spaces
 - 2 NY city
 - 3 Denigrate
 - 4 Tammany leaders
 - 5 Rotating pieces
 - 6 "Grand — Opry"
 - 7 Honeydew
 - 8 Circuits
 - 9 Russian leader
 - 10 Memorabilia

- 11 A husband of Audrey Hepburn
- 12 Soviet sea
- 13 Conservative
- 18 Afghanistan city
- 22 Dance segment
- 25 Win by work
- 26 Jackie's sister
- 28 "Little Women" character
- 30 Dull
- 31 English river
- 32 Card player
- 33 Malarial fever
- 34 Australian port
- 35 Community: abbr.
- 39 Extinct birds



- 40 Purpose
- 43 Take it on the —
- 44 Printing directive
- 46 Nastase's bailiwick
- 47 Bonelike
- 49 Redolent resins
- 50 Moon goddess
- 53 "It's a sin to — lie"
- 55 Bell town
- 56 Watering worker
- 57 Account
- 58 Sour
- 60 Roman statesman
- 61 Pipe part
- 63 Poetic word
- 65 Casino deal



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